

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 10 are amended. No new matter is presented in this Amendment.

The Office Action objects to Figs. 1 and 2 based upon informalities. Figs. 1 and 2 are amended to obviate the objection. Specifically, Figs. 1 and 2 are designated by the legend "Related Art." Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,195,871 to Watanuki. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 10 are amended to recite a method and an apparatus, respectively, comprising an element leading wire in direct contact with a substrate. Watanuki does not disclose, teach or suggest this feature.

Watanuki discloses, in Fig. 2 and at column 2, lines 3-8, lead layers 32 formed on hard layers 31, which in turn are formed on alumina layer 28, and not directly on the substrate, as recited in claims 1 and 10. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 10 are patentable over Watanuki.

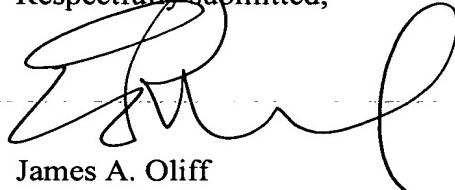
Accordingly, since Watanuki does not disclose, teach or suggest each and every feature recited in claims 1 and 10, the rejection of claims 1 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is improper. Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that independent claims 1 and 10 are patentable over Watanuki.

Claims 2-9 and 11-18 depend from independent claims 1 and 10, respectively, and are likewise patentable over Watanuki at least for their dependence on an allowable base claim, as well as for additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection over Watanuki is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: March 17, 2005

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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheets makes changes to Figs. 1 and 2 and replaces the original sheets with Figs. 1 and 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets